SPEECH

ON THE

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

BY

Dr. SCHULTZ,

M. P. FOR LISGAR, MANITOBA,

Delivered in the

House of Commons, Thursday, 13th April, 1871.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I would willingly have avoided any discussion of the matter which now occupies the attention of this House. I would have avoided it, because everything connected with recent events in Manitoba has been to me of so painful a nature that now that we have better and brighter prospects, I would willingly have allowed the whole matter to have remained untouched. Still, I find in my newly undertaken duties that one's personal feelings must not always be consulted, but that the interests of the people he represents, and of the Country at large must be considered first, and the observations of the hon. gentleman from North Hastings, are such as call from me, as one of the Representatives from Manitoba, all the information I possess on one, and the principal point which he has adduced, namely the complicity of the Hudson Bay Co., or rather of a portion of their officers with the unhappy Rebellion of last winter. I am aware Mr. Speaker that the views which I shall advance in regard to the origin of Red River difficulty, and the substance of the documents which I shall read in support of these views, may differ materially from those generally entertained in some parts of this Dominion, yet I advance them with the full belief that they are concurred in, and indeed, openly expressed by nine tenths of that portion of the people of Manitoba, unconnected with the Rebellion itself, or with the Hudson's Bay Company. It might. at first sight, Sir, appear strange that a Corporation who had lately surrendered their rights to the North West Territory, who had received what might be considered a fair compensation for that surrender, and who moreover, still retained a very considerable landed interest in that Territory, could have any possible reason for desiring anything but the prosperity, the advancement, and the peace of the country. Indeed it was generally advanced as a reason for allowing them to retain one-twentieth of the land, that this concession would bind their interests to ours, and be the means of allaying any possible source of discontent. But, sir, to properly understand the bearing of this question, it is necessary for the hon. members of this House, to bear in mind that there are two elements in the composition of the Hudson Bay Company, namely: The Stockholders of that corporation, and its managing partners in the country. So long as the Company confined its attention to the collection of furs—so long these elements were in accord, and the immense profits, which in former times were made, were fairly divided between the Stockholders, who had advanced the money necessary to carry on the business, and those who had in the country, the care, the danger, and the labor of the trade. Hence it was that while the Stockholder who assumed territorial, as well as trading rights, would sometimes admit, that the country *was* fitted to be something better than a preserve for fur bearing animals, *that* concession was rarely, if ever, made by one of the inland officers, whose profit was derived

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solely from the fur trade, and whose right to participation in any other source of profit was disputed, if it was not entirely ignored by the stockholders.

It will be readily seen, then, Mr. Speaker that there was in such a union of diverse interests, the elements of discord, and this became apparent as soon as the Stockholders consented to entertain a proposition for the purchase of their territorial rights by this country. While the stockholders could see in the large sum to be paid for rights which were then in dispute, an ample compensation for the gradual but inevitable destruction of the fur trade profits which must follow, the inland fur trading officer saw in it only his own ultimate ruin, and opposed the project with all the power he possessed, and when the bargain had been concluded, he felt that Canada had accomplished his ruin by the purchase she had made, and that the stockholders had unfairly dealt with him in refusing him a portion of the compensation they themselves had received. Men so circumstanced, sir, are usually ready for rash and even violent action, and we find the first evidence of this at the annual meeting of the officers at Norway House, held a short time after the conclusion of the negotiations, and a few months before the emeute at Red River.

The following description which I found in one of the respectable journals of the Dominion will, if its evidence may be trusted, show the state of feeling which prevailed:—

"One of the causes of dissatisfaction amongst the Hudson Bay Company's officials in the North West is this: they say that the £300,000 to be paid the Company by the Canadian Government, will be pocketed by the English shareholders, and that not one copper of it will ever be seen by the traders in this country. No doubt they are perfectly right in this view; when the English shareholders get hold of the money they will very likely hold on to it. But the traders of the Nor' West proposed a game a little while ago which, if carried out, would more than make up to them the share of the £300,000, which, they say, the English shareholders intend robbing them of. At a meeting of the Council of Rupert's Land—the body which controls the Company's affairs in the territory, a motion was submitted by one of the Chief Factors, proposing that they should secrete for their special use and benefit, furs to the value of £10,000 to be divided amongst the factors and those interested, just as soon as it should be clearly shown that the English shareholders intended gobbling up the whole of the Canadian purchase money. A lengthy and animated discussion took place on this exceedingly dishonest proposition, after which the motion being put, it was lost simply by the casting vote of the Chairman."

Now, Sir, this account may or may not be exactly correct, but *it is true* that a wide-spread and deep disaffection prevailed and the most violent language and even threats were used towards this Dominion of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, it has been argued that we had rebellion at Red River because we did not first consult the feelings and wishes of the people of that region. Well, I can only say that you will rarely hear that explanation attempted at Red River. Why, sir, I have myself seen on petitions praying for annexation to Canada many of the names of those who were foremost in endeavouring to prevent that union, and if it had been that this was really the cause we would, I think, have found all classes joining in it, instead of its being confined to that portion of the population who had the least property at stake and to the friends and sympathizers of the Hudson Bay Company.

Now, if we assume that the officers of the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Garry were anxious, or even willing, that Canada should possess the North West Territory we find it utterly impossible to explain the fact of their criminal inaction, their advice to Governor McDougall to leave the territory, their surrender of their Fort, their advice to the people to join the Provisional Government of President Riel. But if we assume their complicity in the matter, we can readily understand the prevalent belief among the loyal people, both English and French, of Manitoba that the disaffection and dissatisfaction of the Hudson Bay Company's officers, the disappointment of Governor MacTavish at not being appointed Governor, caused them to hope that with Riel as their tool and agent they could keep out the Governor, disgust Canada with her bargain, and keep the country for some years longer, a preserve for fur bearing animals with the consequent extension of the fur trading profits. That they purposed taking steps which would lead to robbery, and end in murder, I am not prepared to state, but the general belief is, that with Governor McDougall turned back and with a Hudson Bay Co., officer at the head of a Provisional Government they could have forced Canada into an arrangement more suitable to themselves, even if less profitable to the shareholders. However, this may be, I have not risen to make statements, on my own responsibility. I will read to the House a number of affidavits bearing on the matter, and although I could say much from my own knowledge that is relative and corroborative, yet I shall refrain, and leave hon. gentlemen to what opinion they deem fit from the evidence I present. As for myself I shall be glad if they are able to do so, yet, until that Body can show that their responsible officers acted as Loyal men should act under similar circumstances. I cannot consent to their receiving one penny of the money of this Dominion.

The first statement bearing upon the subject is that of Sgt. James Mulligan, a

Pensioner of Her Majesty's 17th Foot and lately and for some time Chief of the Police Force in the Town of Winnipeg. Sgt. Mulligan being duly sworn before one of the recently appointed Manitoba Justices of the Peace states among other things.

"That hearing that the buildings of Dr. Schultz were threatened with a consequent danger of fire extending to the town, said James Mulligan, then Chief of Police, proceeded at once to Fort Garry, and spoke to Chief Factor Dr. Cowan, who was a Justice of the Peace and in charge of Fort Garry, told him what he, the said Mulligan, had heard. Said Mulligan urged said Cowan to take steps to prevent such an outrage, and asked for instructions how to proceed. Cowan answered, what can we do? Said Mulligan replied that it would be advisable to call out the 300 special constables who had been engaged. Said Cowan refused to do so, and said Mulligan returned to take what precautions he could with the two policemen under his charge. Said James Mulligan further says that before the rebels assembled at Stinking River, he gave due notice to said Justice Cowan of their intention to do so, and that the said Justice Cowan seemed to take no notice of it. That repeatedly afterwards up to the time of the Fort being occupied by Riel and his men, the said Mulligan did urge upon the said Cowan the danger in which the Fort stood, and a short time before did inform the said Cowan that the rebels meditated doing so immediately and again urged the said Cowan to call upon the said 300 special constables, but was in all cases distinctly refused. Said James Mulligan further says that a short time after the rebels had taken Fort Garry he went to said Fort with one Sergeant Major Power and requested an interview with Governor McTavish, that he was told that Governor McTavish was too sick to see anyone, but was referred by Dr. Cowan to Acting Governor Judge Black. To Judge Black the said James Mulligan said, I have come herewith Sergeant Major Power to request permisssion to raise the British Flag and to defend it. Judge Black asked him, how that could be done? Said Mulligan declared that he could call on the pensioners to the number of thirty and get as many more as he wanted from the loyal population. Said Black said, will see the Governor to-night and we will see about it, and I will give you an answer to-morrow. On or about three o'clock on the following day the said Mulligan was informed that the request about the flag *could not be granted, and that his services with pensioners and loyal men were not required.* Said James Mulligan further says that on the 28th November, 1869 he did receive from Governor MacTavish an order in writing to procure the services of seven men and with them to guard certain Government stores in the storehouse of Doctor Schultz, and that said order was issued in consequence of an urgent appeal for protection from Jno. A. Snow, the Agent of the Canadian Government at that time, that he did procure the said seven men and place them to guard the building, that he remained till the seventh day of December, when the buildings were surrounded by an armed force under Riel, and orders having come from Col. Dennis to surrender he was included, in the general capture, and remained for ten weeks in prison. Said Mulligan further states that after ten weeks imprisonment he went and saw Dr. Cowan, and asked to see Governor MacTavish, that he wished the pay of the men that he had employed to defend the Government stores. Said MacTavish raised all possible objections and said, to tell the truth Mulligan, Riel has deceived me, he promised that he would respect my guard, and he also promised me that he would remain only three days. Mulligan then said "you seem to have made a close bargain with Riel," which Governor MacTavish did not deny, and admitted in general terms that he had made a mistake in not calling upon the loyal people. Said Mulligan further says that a few days after the taking of Fort Garry by the rebels, he called upon Dr. Cowan and asked how those rebels were being fed and whether they had broken into any of the stores. Said Cowan said that they had not, but that he had given them access to the stores. Said James Mulligan finally says that he has been Chief of police in the town of Winnipeg for four years, and that he acted in that capacity during the whole of the rebellion until his own imprisonment on the 7th December, 1869. That he repeatedly warned Doctor Cowan and other of his superior officers of the rising and of the intention of the rebels to overthrow the Government and take Fort Garry, but that on all occasions he was rebuffed and all his offers of services on behalf of himself and in the name of the loyal people who were willing to support the police authority and anxious to keep down the rebellion were distinctly refused, and that the said James Mulligan fully believes that the Hudson Bay Company authorities could at any time have stopped the said rebellion, but that they encouraged it for their own purposes and verily believes Riel and his men to have been invited to take possession of Fort Garry."

The next statement is one also upon oath made by a very respectable resident of the Parish of Kildonan who states.

"That during the fall of 1869 he was working in the vicinity of Fort Garry, and slept occasionally at the house of his sister in said Fort. That on one occasion, just before the gathering of rebels at Stinking River to resist the entrance of the Hon. Wm. McDougall into the Territory, in going out in the dusk of the evening he saw Louis Riel and Chief Factor Dr. Cowan enter Fort Garry by the South Gate, and not wishing to be seen, he, the said John Flett, did enter the porch leading to the Hudson Bay Company's store. That while in said porch the said Riel and said Cowan advanced and stopped about five yards from where he was. That he did distinctly hear this conversation which took place between the said Cowan and Riel. That it appeared from the remarks he heard as the said Cowan and Riel approached that said Cowan urged said Riel to go on with the proposed stopping of the Hon. Wm. McDougall at Stinking River. That said Riel replied, "What good will it do me? What will I get for it?" Said Cowan answered that Governor Mactavish would do as he had promised, and said Cowan also assured him, the said Riel, that he would get what he had been promised. That said Cowan and said Riel then walked in the direction of said Cowan's residence. That further, he verily believes from the whole conversation that said Cowan, who was then in charge of Fort Garry, was inciting and encouraging the said Riel by promises of payment to take active steps for the keeping out of the said Governor McDougall which said Riel seemed to hesitate about doing. That also, he did on several occasions see the said Cowan and Riel in close conversation, but could not hear what was said.

Another and the last which I shall call the attention of this Honourable House to, is that a Gentl man who occupied an official position under the Hudson Bay Company for some years and may be supposed to have had considerable insight into the real state of affairs, states.

"That about four years ago he was commissioned by the Hon. Hudson Bay Company in England a member of the Council of Assiniboia and that he has been a Petit Magistrate and Collector of Customs for about ten years. That about one week before the erection of barricades at Stinking River, and when the rebels were then collecting at that place, he was summoned to attend a meeting of the said Council of Assiniboia to consider the state of affairs. That at said Council he warned the other members of the gathering near his place on the Stinking River, but that the President, Judge Black, then acting Governor, did not suggest or advise any active

measures to prevent the evil. That he then urged upon the Council the necessity, and offered to raise among the loyal portion of his own people, the French half-breeds, enough men to put the gathering down. That on pressing the matter he was allowed to see what he could do in getting the names of persons willing to act in such service and to report. That he afterwards procured the names of ninety-six able-bodied men willing to act, and that the fact was duly reported, but that Governor Mactavish directed him to disband and pay off the force which he had gathered at the north side of the barricade to the number of fifty six without giving him any reason for doing so. That he requested and waited a day and a half on a written order, but that such order was distinctly refused. That there were on being estimated about sixty-six of the party under Riel and Bruce at the said barricade at Stinking River. That he asked Governor Mactavish for additional permission to call on the English people, but that request was refused. That afterwards, and a short time before Fort Garry was taken possession of by said rebels, he informed Dr. Cowan the master of said fort, of their intention of doing so, but that he did not advise or take any steps to prevent their doing so, and that in his presence a prominent French half-breed informed Governor Mactavish of the intention of the rebels to take possession of the Hudson Bay Company's safe and of the Fort. That to the best of his knowledge and belief the officers of the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Garry did not wish to stop the action of the insurgents at Stinking River, and that had he been given authority to so it could easily have been accomplished with the aid or the French half-breeds alone. That the said officers discouraged and frowned down every suggestion of a means of doing so and refused all offers of aid and that he believes that for some private reason the movement of the insurgents under Riel, Bruce and Lepine was thoroughly in accord with their own wishes."

And now, Mr. Speaker, as regards that clause in the Supplementary Estimates, which asks this country for $40,000 to relieve the sufferers from the recent rebellion at Red River. I may say that this is a point which specially pleases me. I am perfectly well aware that this government might, had it so chosen, waited to ask the country for an amount for this purpose, till an investigation had been made, till evidence had been taken, till a Commission had sat. Yet, without any undue pressure that I am aware of, they propose to spend this sum in this very laudable way, and I am disposed to look upon it, as an earnest, that the Government intends to deal fairly, possibly even liberally with the loyal sufferers of last winter. I may say also now that we are discussing the subject, that at a time when this Government was accused of having no sympathy with the Red River loyalists they did that which saved me, at least, from utter ruin and inauguarated a principle which, by this clause in the supplementary estimate theyseem determined to carry out. I have also since learned, Sir, that this relief to myself, which I speak of, was not afforded without a considerable stretch of legal authority, and that a Minister of the Crown even became personally responsible for the amount. Well, the conclusion that I feel forced to come to, after a considerable degree of doubt on this matter, is, that in this matter at least, the Government are not so utterly heartless as has sometimes been represented and if the indemnity proposed, be confined to these and these only, who are known to have lost their property or their time for the sake of loyalty to the Crown, it will tend to reassure that class of sufferers in Manitoba who now consider that they have been neglected and disregarded.—(Applause.)

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